

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

[Home](#) > [Research Program](#) > Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the [UNHCR's Refworld](#) website.

22 July 2013

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Pakistan: Process for the registration of births, particularly in Karachi; whether children born in 2009 and 2010 in Karachi would be registered with both a District Municipal Corporation (DMC) and a Union Council Administration (UCA), with each issuing separate certificates with different registration numbers and details; type of certificate or registration extract issued (2009-2010)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Process for Registration of Births

The US Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012* indicates that reporting births in Pakistan is voluntary, and that birth records "are not kept uniformly, particularly in rural areas" (ibid.). The same source notes that according to the Pakistani government, 75 percent of the population is registered, but that "actual figures may be lower" (ibid.).

1.1 Cooperation Between the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and Karachi Union Councils to Issue Birth Certificates

According to *Country Reports 2012*, NADRA issues birth certificates and other identity documents (US 19 Apr. 2013, 49). The Pakistan-based *Daily Messenger* indicates that NADRA's Civil Registration Management System was launched in 2006 (*Daily Messenger* 3 Aug. 2012). According to the Pakistan Press International Information Services, in 2007, NADRA and the City District Government of Karachi signed an agreement for the computerization of municipal records related to births, deaths, marriages and divorce in Karachi (12 Aug. 2007). The same source indicates that under this agreement, NADRA would provide training as well as technical assistance to the Karachi union councils, which would immediately begin issuing computerized birth certificates (Pakistan Press International Information Services 12 Aug. 2007). According to the agreement, the union councils would maintain "total authority to run administrative affairs" (ibid.). In 2009, the Pakistan Press International Information Services mentioned the issuance of computerized birth certificates in Karachi by union councils with NADRA's cooperation (ibid. 5 Aug. 2009). In 2012, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation Administrator reportedly said that the 178 union councils of Karachi were linked with NADRA's Civil Registration Management System and issuing computerized birth certificates, and that the system was "fully implemented in Karachi" (*Daily Messenger* 3 Aug. 2012).

1.2 Process for the Registration of Births in Karachi

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, an academic at McGill University, who specializes in Islamic law and the history of Pakistan, stated that since 2001, birth certificates in Karachi are issued by the City District Government of Karachi (CDGK), which has 18 Town Administrations and 178 Union Councils (PhD Candidate 17 July 2013). In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, a representative at the Karachi Municipal Corporation (KMC) said that to register a birth in Karachi, the parents must submit their documents (such as a certificate from the hospital) to the Union Council Administration (UCA) (KMC 16 July

2013). The UCA forwards the information to NADRA, and after verification, NADRA issues the birth certificate (ibid.).

Similarly, the US Department of State's Country Reciprocity Schedule for Pakistan, which is an undated document pertaining to the situation in Pakistan in general, indicates that

Births are supposed to be registered with the Union Council within two months. Informants go to the Union Council, fill out a form, and provide their identification. The process for late registration is more complex, requiring two affidavits and the presentation of the child to the District Health Officer (DHO). The DHO then issues a letter to the concerned Union Council authorizing the late entry. Once this process has been completed, the informant can go to the Union Council for registration. (US n.d.)

However, the same Country Reciprocity Schedule for Pakistan also indicates that

... [w]here a record of birth exists, a certificate to that effect may be obtained from the Registrar of Births and Deaths, the Municipal Corporation, or the Union Council. Caution should be used, however, in accepting such certificates, since they frequently do not match the original ledgers. (ibid.)

Corroboration of this information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

2. Whether Birth Registration at both a District Municipal Corporation and Union Council Administration Occurred in 2009 and 2010

According to the representative at the Karachi Municipal Corporation, children born in 2009 and 2010 in Karachi would not be registered with both a District Municipal Corporation and a UCA (KMC 16 July 2013). He said that the Karachi Municipal Corporation used to issue birth certificates, but that in 2009 and 2010, the birth certificate would have been administered by the UCA and NADRA (ibid.). Corroboration of this information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response. Meanwhile, the US Country Reciprocity Schedule for Pakistan, referring to the situation in Pakistan in general, mentions the existence of two forms of birth certificates:

Registrants can request the birth certificate on either the Union Council form, which varies from area to area and can be provided on the same day, or the NADRA form, which is uniform and usually provided in a few days. (US n.d.)

Corroboration of this information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3. Type of Certificate or Registration Extract Issued

Information about the type of certification or registration extract issued was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response. Pakistan Press International Information Services describe the NADRA certificates issued with the cooperation of union councils as "computerized" and issued in Urdu and English (5 Aug. 2009). According to the US Department of State, certificates issued by either NADRA or union councils "should bear a stamp and signature by the Union Council Secretary" (US n.d.). Further details about these certificates could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Daily Messenger. 3 August 2012. "178 UCs Linked to Nadra System: Karachiites to Get Computerized Documents." (Factiva)

Karachi Municipal Corporation (KMC). 16 July 2013. Telephone interview of a representative in the office of the Administrator.

Pakistan Press International Information Services. 5 August 2009. "Issuance of Marriage Certificates Lauded."

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PhD Candidate, McGill University. 17 July 2013. Correspondence sent to the Research Directorate.

United States (US). 19 April 2013. Department of State. "Pakistan." *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012*. <<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/204621.pdf>> [Accessed 17 July 2013]

_____. N.d. Department of State. "Pakistan Reciprocity Schedule." <http://travel.state.gov/visa/fees/fees_5455.html?cid=9713> [Accessed 11 July 2013]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Attempts to contact officials at the Pakistan Mission in Ottawa and the Pakistan Consulate in Toronto were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: Australia--Customs and Border Protection Services; Factiva; Karachi Municipal Corporation; Pakistan--Mission in Ottawa, Consulate in Toronto, NADRA; United Kingdom--Border Agency; United Nations--Refworld.

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[Top of Page](#)

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